

S. S. SIMON AND JUDE'S CHURCH, BLAIRSVILLE.

The Catholics of Blairsville were attended at first by the Priests who resided at "Sportsman's Hall on the Hill," as it is sometimes called, where St. Vincent's Monastery is now. The regularly appointed pastors of this place were Rev. Theodore Brommis, Rev. L. S. Phelan (or Whelan), Rev. Fr. Lanigan, Rev. P. Heilbron, Rev. G. F. X. O'Brien, Rev. Charles Bonaventine McGuire, and Rev. Terrence McGirr, who was the last before the appointment of Rev. J. A. Stillinger, to take charge of Sportsman's Hall and Blairsville. The congregation of S. S. Simon's and Jude's Church was organized in the year 1829, when two lots of ground were purchased, bearing the numbers of the plan 241 and 243; in size 120x150 feet, situated at the corner of Campbell street and Coal lane.

The land was paid for in full on February 8th, 1830, when it was conveyed to John Brown and John Campbell, of the borough of Blairsville, by Robert Brown and Ann his wife, of the borough of Greensburg. It was transferred by John Brown and John Campbell to the first trustees of the congregation February 3d, 1831, viz: John Campbell, William Bradley, Thomas Shannon, Thomas Donnelly and John W. Brown. By these gentlemen it was transferred to Rt. Rev. F. P. Kenrick, Bishop of Philadelphia, December 9th, 1831.

The arrangement was made a condition on which the Bishop sent a priest to take charge of the congregation. A subscription was taken up in the year 1829, for the purpose of erecting a new church. The following names appear on the list: John Campbell, John W. Brown, Patrick O'Donnell, James Cantwell, John Schrosk, Hugh Harkins, Thomas McCullough, Thomas McFarland, Richard B. McCabe, Mark Graham, John McMahan, Peter McMahan, Lewis Mittinger, Michael Duras, Prosper Howard, Benjamin Crissman, David Mahan, John McAfee, John McMillen, Meredith Reed, Edward Shevlin, sr., Elizabeth Emerson, James McDermott, Con. Johnston, Wm. McAfee, Samuel McAnulty, James Murry, John Borland, Edward Laughlin, P. Duffy, Thomas Brown, A. Richards, James P. Johnston, Stewart Davis, Wm. P. Sterrett, Joseph McMasters, Thomas Lindsay, John Sheridan, Lawrence McMillen, Daniel Short, Christopher Hughes, sr., James D. McGill, Hugh Curran, John Short, George Miller, John Conway, Hugh Conway, James McGuire, John McCarty, Dennis O'Neil, James P. Donnelly, John Flowers, John Conner, Edw. Davis, William Flowers, Thomas McCaffrey, John Garrigan, James G. Brown, Rodger Meeching, Daniel O'Neil, Anthony Loftus, George Glass, Michael McKeever, Thomas Donnelly, Henry Rentzel, Jacob Burgoon, Cornelius Campbell, Rev. Thomas Heyden, Mathias Blake, Michael Henry, Charles O'Rourke, William Blakeley, Michael Leyden, Michael Kelly, Jane Renney, John Kerboy, Bernard Ferrier, Michael Brawly, John Walsh, Peter Short, L. S. Waterman, D. McKaley, James Haney, Daniel Gilmartin. There is also a "list No. 2," exhibiting the names of those who subscribed and paid since the settlement of March 11, 1830. This list was made for the purpose of finishing the church, and to pay the debt due by the congregation. The managers were William Bradley, Thomas Shannon, John Campbell, Thomas Donnelly and John W. Brown. There was also a subscription take up at Boliver for the benefit of the church in May, 1831, by Wilson Knott, Esq., superintendent of the canal. The full amount of subscription was \$676.11; the cost of ground \$85.00; of erection of church \$1,244.17. The number of Easter communicants, the first year after the formation of the congregation was 180 representing about 300 souls. The number increased every year till in 1840 it reached 310.

The dedication of the church took place October 28, 1830, the feast of S. S. Simon and Jude. The Rt. Rev. F. P. Kennick blessed it, assisted by Rev. John Hughes. Fr. Stillinger's appointment to the pastorship immediately followed, and on the Sunday of Advent, 1830, (November 28,) he entered upon the discharge of his duties.